The front cover reproduces Edith Irvine's *Died of Fright,* San Francisco Earthquake scene in the produce district, 18 April 1906.

The frontispiece reproduces Edith Irvine's photograph of City Hall, San Francisco, taken on 18 April 1906.

THE BEAUTIFUL ILLUSION OF SUBSTANCE

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND THE AMERICAN WEST

AN EXHIBITION
SELECTED FROM
THE BYU PHOTO ARCHIVES
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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY
BY
DENNIS ROWLEY

FRIENDS OF THE BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
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Appreciation is expressed to Wilma "Billy" Plunkett, Photo Archives Supervisor,
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When Louis Daguerre produced the first successful daguerreotype in January 1839 and triumphantly declared that he had "seized the light . . . [and] arrested its flight," he spoke for a generation of pioneers who, acting independently but concurrently, gave the world the foundations of photography as it is known today.[1] The daguerreotype had the central features of contemporary photography—the use of a device and a light-sensitive artifact to permanently fix images of the real world on a flat surface. Each daguerreian image was so accurate in its reflections that use of a magnifying glass could reveal details invisible to the unaided eye. Each daguerreotype, however, was unique, making it impossible to obtain multiple copies of the same image. Englishman William Henry Fox Talbot responded to Daguerre's announcement by publicly declaring he "had also discovered a method for fixing images in a camera."[2] Talbot's end product was fuzzy when compared with the sharpness and clarity of Daguerre's, but it had the distinct advantage of being reproducible. That same year Talbot's fellow countryman, Sir John Herschel, coined the terms *photography* and *to photograph* and joined Talbot in independently inventing a way to sensitize paper to light. Herschel also exposed the world's first glass plate negative and made paper prints by both processes.

"No improvement on [Daguerre's] method was ever attempted, nor was any needed. Born whole, it faded into disuse two decades later with the introduction of Scott Archer's collodion wet plate process, which combined the sharpness of the daguerreotype with the reproducibility of Talbot's method."[3] Talbot improved on his method by introducing the calotype in 1841 in the first of many improvements and developments that mark the progress and growth of photographic science and art for the past 150 years. "Although he never achieved the fame and popularity of Daguerre, Talbot provided the scientific underpinning for all future photography and was the first pioneer in expanding its usage."[4]

Since its invention in 1839, photography has grown from a local novelty to a predominant art form. It is a powerful force for social documentation and has become a business, professional, and scientific enterprise of global proportions. During the first fifty years of its existence photography was primarily an "aristocratic curiosity."[5] By 1890, however, its unique tendency to democratize memory making had pervaded all levels of society. Today we cannot imagine life without the omnipresent photographic image visible on every hand in its myriad forms—slides, transparencies, magazine and newspaper photographs, framed works of art, passport and driver's license photographs, signs, posters and billboards, motion pictures, and television. Some writers even contend that the image has assumed such importance in the American psyche that it is more real than the actuality of which it is but a symbol.[6]

Whether as symbol or its own reality, the photographic image is indispensable to an understanding of contemporary life. The tired adage about a picture being worth a thousand words has been fulfilled in ways undreamed of by its creator. To find a research library or an archives having major nineteenth- and twentieth-century holdings whose documentation does not include photographic images is virtually impossible.[7] Moreover, increased use of images by anthropologists, historians, psychologists, and sociologists has resulted in a growing awareness and appreciation for the broader iconographic uses of photographs in ways that transcend their status as mere illustrations to accompany written text; in iconographic use,

the image itself becomes the principal focus of scholarly analysis. Such use has, in turn, taught us more about the theory and methodology of studying man and his past through photographs.[8]

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE AMERICAN WEST

Immediately after "the first ships out of France brought news of [this new] process to America,"[9] photography began moving west with the waves of immigrating Americans—traders, farmers, soldiers, Mormons, argonauts, and forty-niners. As early as 1841 John C. Fremont unsuccessfully attempted to make daguerreotypes on his first Western expedition. Embarking from points as diverse as Vermont, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., early daguerreotypists such as John Plumbe, Jr., J. H. Fitzgibbon, Peter Britt, Lucian Foster, Marsena Cannon, John Wesley Jones, Robert H. Vance, Carleton E. Watkins, Eadweard Muybridge, and Thomas Easterly had covered much of the West by 1860. Galleries were established in such cities as Harrodsburgh Springs, Kentucky; St. Louis, Missouri; Nauvoo, Illinois; Dubuque, Iowa; Salt Lake City, Utah; Portland and Jacksonville, Oregon; and San Francisco, California.[10]

Since those first decades, an ever-increasing army of photographers has continued to document the themes, regions, and historical periods of the American West. An unending stream of images has captured the enduring face of mountain and plain, basin and range, stream and lake. Conestoga wagons and railroads, breathtaking scenery, the degradation of drought, villages, farms and cities, fire, flood and earthquake, tourism and mining, industry and agriculture, military bases and national parks, the native American and the immigrant, the old-timer and the tenderfoot—all have been scrutinized and preserved by the lens. From the travelers on the overland trails to those who came around the Horn in 1849 to seek their fortune in California, from the Apache moving east on trains as prisoners of war to the Okies moving west in trucks as exiles from drought, from surfers on a Southern California beach to construction workers on the Gateway Arch or Hoover Dam, the many faces and experiences of the American West have been grist for the photographer's mill, carefully preserved in little slices of time and laid away for future generations. To the finger poised on the cocked and waiting shutter the American West is a mythical region of constantly renewed and replenished virginity, making possible an unending succession of photographic cycles of conquest.

The rich legacy of this army of photographers after 150 years belies Walt Whitman's predictions and calms his lamentations. In "Yonnondio" he wrote:

A song, a poem of itself—the word itself a dirge,
Amid the winds, the rocks, the storm and wintry night,
To me such misty, strange tableaux the syllables
calling up;
Yonnondio—I see, far in the west or north, a limitless
ravine, with plains and mountains dark,
I see swarms of stalwart chieftains, medicine-men, and
warriors,
As flitting by like clouds of ghosts, they pass and are
gone in the twilight,
(Race of the woods, the landscapes free, and the falls!
No picture, poem, statement, passing them to the future:)

Yonnondio! Yonnondio!—unlimn'd they disappear;
To-day gives place, and fades—the cities, farms,
factories fade;
A muffled sonorous sound, a wailing word is borne
through the air for a moment,
Then blank and gone and still, and utterly lost.

THE EXHIBIT

This exhibit is drawn from the Harold B. Lee Library's extensive Photo Archives. It features four photographers of the American West whose works illustrate many of the themes of change in photography and the West discussed above. Their lives and careers cover virtually the entire century and a half since the invention of photography. They are Ansel Adams, William Henry Jackson, Charles Roscoe Savage, and Edith Irvine.

In lamenting the lack of an artist on the Lewis and Clark expedition and the "complete non-visualization of the wonders and sights that they saw," the type of artist needed for "the monumental task of rendering the vast western spaces, and the strange native inhabitants," is described as follows: "It would have taken a master of landscape painting, a painter with a scientific eye for landforms, an accomplished animal painter, and a penetrating, energetic portraitist, who was not afraid of Indians, to do justice to the sights seen on their journey."[11]

In each of the four photographers in this exhibit is found one or more of the above-mentioned qualities. In the four combined, all qualities are present. Ansel Adams and William Henry Jackson are internationally known for the majesty and sensitivity of their work; Savage has at least a regional reputation for photographs equal in quality to theirs; and Irvine is a recent discovery likely to join their ranks when her images become more widely known.[12]

The exhibited images convey a range of themes—the enduring, unchanging face of the West, often with the hand of man etched upon it; not just a mountain or a canyon or a vast plain, but a railroad track and a train, a bridge, a surveying party, initials carved on a rock, or an assistant placed in the foreground to provide human scale; man's interaction with the land, through buildings, railroads, surveys; the power of man's mind to impose a grid on the land, to have dominion over it and to control it, in our minds, in our libraries, and in our government houses.

And, we leave our mark upon the land—pueblos growing from the earth, their seemingly eternal occupants as patient and enduring as Ansel's mountains; our tracks in ruts, trails, railroad lines; even names carved in rock (Independence Rock or tombstones) as the hungry land takes us back, succors us, and gives us rest; our technology, drawn from the earth, hardened, refined, and used to subdue the obstacles and barriers of the earth: in trains and bridges, and in dams and turbines to generate electricity for the darkness that comes as the land strikes back with snow, ice, flood, earthquake, and fire.

Over all and around all moves the presence of the photographer, searching, probing, framing, recording, touching reality as gently as the passing breeze, seeking just the right amount of light, freezing tiny slices of time and place and trying to leave nature and man undisturbed. Yet, the photographer always leaves a mark. In that nether region known as man's

interaction with, perspective on, and images of the land, there is now another view, another moment in time, enriching and augmenting the previously available information. The photographic views of the West with which we interact are indeed a mark—a more enduring and significant one than ATV tracks or Donner party wagon ruts in Great Basin sand, ax marks on a tree, a fire ring, or "fool's names" on Independence Rock in Wyoming. The West and its images are a natural marriage. Once joined no one can tear them asunder, short of the outright destruction of one or the other.

ANSEL ADAMS, 1902–1984

Ansel Adams, at age fourteen, took his first photographs of the Yosemite Valley in 1916. It was an experience of such intensity that he came to view it as a lifelong inspiration. He published his first portfolio in 1927, had his work displayed at the Smithsonian and in his first important one-man show at San Francisco's M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in 1931, and published the first of many books dealing with photographic technique in 1935. During the next forty years he ranged widely photographing the American West. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to photograph the national parks in 1948 and was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1966. Beginning in 1948, he published numerous portfolios. By the late 1970s, when he had given up active photography to focus on exhibition prints and publications, his prints were selling for prices unequaled by any other living American photographer.

"Throughout his long and prolific career, Ansel Adams created a body of work which has come to exemplify not only the purist approach to the medium, but to many people the definitive pictorial statement on the American western landscape."[13] "More than any other artists of the twentieth century . . . [he and Georgia O'Keeffe] focused on the enduring qualities of the Western landscape."[14] It is significant that Adams's "Self Portrait, Monument Valley, Utah, 1958" is a view of his own shadow with his camera and tripod as cast on a huge monolithic rock. Adams saw and endowed mountains and their rock children with feelings, presence, and souls. His spirit and the spirit of the Western mountains were one, bonded and blended. Adams was also strongly associated with a visionary sense of the redemptive beauty of wilderness and the importance of its preservation. The prestige and popularity of his work are enhanced by extraordinary technical perfection and his insistence on absolute control of the photographic processes. His photo-philosophy "embodied an approach to perfect realization of photographic vision through technically flawless prints."[16]

In 1893 Frederick J. Turner presented his famous address on the closing of the frontier, nine years before Adams's birth. Nonetheless, probably no photographer of the twentieth century has seen the American West whole and sliced out chunks of it as his own more completely and distinctly than Ansel Adams. He saw each chunk, each slice so distinctly that he left a mark upon it. Each time he looked, he saw the same topography with fresh eyes, as though for the first time. Seeing more, he positioned himself and his camera in the exact time and place to capture what became, after he worked the magic of his darkroom, a unique view. No matter how far or

wide or long one searched, one could not find that view in nature. It existed for a second or two for Ansel Adams because he saw the potential in the raw material that nature threw at his senses and he willed a unique image into existence. Ever after he used that unique negative as the symphonic score he once compared it with to bring into existence a series of photographic performances in the form of equally unique prints. As viewers, we are astonished by the intrepid endurance of the master nature photographer of our time, with the rock-like patience to outwait the sun and the moon.

The views exhibited are from Portfolio V (1970). They depict the enduring face of the West. We see the unchanging stolidity of huge rock monoliths in the Alabama Hills of California's Owens Valley, the "stark black-and-white of Lone Pine Peak, and the harsh desolation of the Mudhills, where nothing grows." Juxtaposed are the moon, "swept up by ethereal clouds in a never-never land," and the "mysterious radiance of the Black Sun," in images "mystical and disturbing." "The monumental White Stump broken by huge storms, weathered by high mountain sunlight and deep snows, is a profound and heroic symbol." So also are "the Petroglyphs, with their fleeing or meditative beasts . . . incised on shadowed rocks." These prehistoric rock drawings "testify to the joy of primitive Man in the chase of these magic animals" and pay silent reminder of the heroic and curious endurance of the mark of man on the land and on nature. Adams's easily transportable images, and those of William Henry Jackson as well, took the mountain and the mountains, with astonishing though symbolic literalness, to thousands of Mohammeds. The profound statement of these views provides an appropriate backdrop for the remainder of the exhibit, which is more concerned with images of man and his activities set against that enduring, unchanging stage.[17]

WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON, 1843–1942

Jackson "recorded the American frontier and the West with his camera, creating images that challenged the American imagination and became part of the nation's consciousness."[18] Peter B. Hales, author of a recent book on Jackson, explains:

As an intelligent, ambitious, and gifted individual working in a medium of great influence, Jackson became a powerful progenitor of the changes in the American conception of the West and of landscape in general. This he did while immersed in a wide variety of significant cultural institutions; thus his work resonates as part of the complex process of negotiation that defines the way his American culture adapted to changing conditions and drew its individual members along with it.[19]

Born in Keesville, New York, Jackson, whose father was an amateur daguerreotypist, learned photography as a boy and worked as a photographer's retoucher and colorist. After serving as a military staff artist in the Civil War, he left a job in a Vermont studio after a broken love affair and traveled West as a bullwhacker. A man of enormous energy and stamina, Jackson was a pencil-and-brush artist, a writer, an explorer, and a prolific photographer who produced tens of thousands of negatives. His career as the nineteenth century's most famous landscape and Indian portrait photographer had its formal

beginnings in Omaha, Nebraska, where he opened a studio in 1867 and began a series of Indian portraits and documentary studies of their reservations.[20]

On a five-month railroad trip in 1869, along the route of the newly created transcontinental line, Jackson learned to make "cogent pictures of the settled industrialized West. These photographs participated in and celebrated the nation's enthusiasm for progress and the fulfillment of what would later be called manifest destiny. At the same time, [he] was attracted to scenic photography of the western landscape. His 1869 landscapes are, for the most part, a collection of awkward depictions of sublime spectacles and standard attractions. Yet Jackson's appreciation of—and ability to portray—the landscape grew more assured and sophisticated. A dichotomy appeared in his early work, between celebration of the untrammeled landscape on the one hand, and the celebration of development on the other. This became increasingly pronounced in the following decade."[21]

In 1870 Jackson was asked by Ferdinand Vandeveer Hayden, who had established the U.S. Geological Survey two years earlier, to join the Hayden Survey of the Territories. During the years he worked with the survey, he photographed the Grand Tetons, the Yellowstone area, Southwest Indians, the Colorado region, a series of cliff ruins in Mancos Canyon, and the Mesa Verde region. "Many of [his] best-known photographs—of Yellowstone, Mesa Verde, and the Mountain of the Holy Cross, for example—were made during the survey years, 1870–1878. These reflected his sense of the sublime landscape as a fairyland of strange, remarkable beauty. Jackson's sublime was not the alien, disturbing beauty of some contemporary photographers like Timothy H. O'Sullivan. Rather, it was one where man was accommodated by the landscape and where the possibility of living in or somehow using the landscape was implicit. In other views, however, such as those of mining districts in Montana and Colorado, he was acutely aware of civilization's encroachment on a wild and desolate country and of the losses that followed development. He was often at pains to minimize the evidence of civilization either by dwarfing it or by striving to make it picturesque."[22]

During the twenty years from 1878 to 1898, "Jackson photographed railroads in which [prominent financier Jay] Gould held substantial interests. These commissions combined scenic, picturesque landscape photography with industrial boosterism, and were Jackson's stock-in-trade until the silver panic of 1893. By the turn of the century, he had worked for more than two dozen lines in the United States, Mexico, and even New Zealand, India, and Siberia."[23]

"Following a brief partnership with Denver portrait photographer A. E. Rinehart, Jackson built a flourishing business that specialized in railroad and landscape photography. He incorporated the W. H. Jackson Photograph and Publishing Company in 1884, and his successively larger, more fashionable studios and residences reflected the growth of the enterprise. By 1892, his staff had grown in response to high demand for Jackson views; it included five photographers besides Jackson, and several printers, retouchers, and colorists to finish their work for distribution."[24]

"Riding the wave of civic and industrial boosterism that characterized the 1880s, Jackson emphasized the cleanliness and beauty of western cities and the picturesque scenery that tourists expected to find on their visits. The sublime, sometimes troubled wilderness of his earlier photographs appeared

infrequently as Jackson learned to appreciate his prosperity and made peace with the agencies of change. Tourism was a lucrative business, and Jackson sought popular views of standard attractions to stimulate the tourist trade.''[25]

''Jackson was in great demand, and continued to photograph actively throughout the 1880s, especially for the railroads and for an extended series of large pictures of Spanish missions in California. But by the end of the decade, he was as much an editor and publisher of photographers as he was a photographer. His staff produced views throughout Colorado while he tended to the more lucrative clients who required his personal touch.''[26]

For twenty-five years Jackson traveled throughout the West with his wet plates and portable darkroom creating a pictorial record of natural wonders. ''His photographs served not only as documentation . . . they became the means by which attention was focused on the West, its wonders and its possibilities. His stereoscopic views and prints of the Western landscape were commercial successes, seen and admired by Americans whose concepts of the West were shaped by Jackson's perspective of the land.''[27] Jackson's photographs of the Yellowstone region were instrumental in the creation of America's first national park in 1872.

In 1897, Jackson packed the bulk of his vast negative collection and moved to a new position at the Detroit Photographic Company. Their specialties were postcards and ''views'' for the mass market. Except for the last decade and a half of his life, which he spent as a painter and working on his memoirs, Jackson spent the balance of his active photographic career, from 1897 until 1924, with the Detroit Company. He died in 1942 at the age of ninety-nine.

On exhibit are samples from the earlier periods of Jackson's career. They include the unique and recently discovered ambrotype of his lost love, ''Caddie,'' a picture he carried west with him in 1866;[28] five wall-hung shots of mountains and trains in New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah; sample views from the Hayden Survey years, including a photograph of the survey party and a Jackson watercolor of an imaginary view from Independence Rock; a self-portrait in oil; a hand-colored image of a Ute buck; two scenes of old Santa Fe; a view of his two assistants, one a photographer and one a mule; and views of Utah's Castlegate in a Mexico, Colorado, and Utah album.

CHARLES ROSCOE SAVAGE, 1832–1909

Like many fellow Mormons and Utahns, C. R. Savage was born in England. He was poorly educated as a youth. Converted to Mormonism in 1848, he immigrated to New York in 1857 after service as a missionary in Switzerland for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and employment in a stationery store in Portsmouth, England. After working for two years in a printing office, he headed west on assignment for the LDS church as a photographer, arriving in Florence, Nebraska, in 1859.

In Florence, Savage set up his camera and, using an old grey blanket for a backdrop, began taking portraits for hire, thus making his first commercial start in the business. After also selling photographs in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Savage purchased a wagon and team of oxen and completed his immigration to Utah for which he had contracted in 1855. Savage arrived in Salt Lake City with the Brown Company on

27 August 1860. He also took views of the Mormon Trail, but none are extant. In 1861 Savage opened the Pioneer Art Gallery on East Temple Street after a brief partnership with Marsena Cannon, who left Utah that same year.

Savage was the "most prolific and talented pictorial Utah photographer of his day."[29] He ranged widely, taking portraits, weddings, landscapes, and documentary views. "With a natural feeling for the outdoors, Savage preferred scenic photography to studio work and his views of mountains and rivers appeared on stereographs wherever they were sold."[30] He traveled the American West in search of views of the "Great West," as he put it, and marketed those views in Utah and in the East. "By 1866, his views were being published . . . in such publications as *Harper's Weekly*. His 'Views of the Great West' were sold as stereoscopic series for both Union Pacific and Denver & Rio Grande Western railroads. These companies supplied Savage with private railroad cars to take him on his photographic excursions. It was his fine work with the railroads that helped establish the Union Pacific tradition for excellent pictorial presentations of the West, a tradition that survives to this day."[31]

Savage willingly traveled in search of views. In 1866 he took a lengthy trip first to San Francisco and then around Cape Horn to New York. He returned to Utah through Nebraska City, "where he fitted out a special photographic wagon [which included a darkroom], for the trip across the plains to Salt Lake City."[32] He made hundreds of pictures along the way, many of them extant today, and returned to Utah a much improved photographer, having picked up new ideas about his craft from other lensmen along the way. In 1870 he visited Southern Utah with Brigham Young, making stops in the Rio Virgin country, Zion Canyon, and the Mormon settlements in Utah's Dixie. Hundreds of images from this trip are extant in many collections today.

Possibly Savage's most famous and significant historical photographs were taken on the occasion of the driving of the golden spike that formed the final link in the long-pursued dream of a transcontinental railroad. He was at Promontory, Utah, on 10 May 1869 along with two colleagues, Andrew J. Russell, the official photographer for the Union Pacific, and Alfred A. Hart, the official photographer for the Central Pacific. All three took many shots at different moments and from slightly different perspectives of the action leading up to and surrounding the historic event. Nonetheless, many of the views are virtually identical, causing some confusion in crediting a particular view in later years as all three photographers published their work.

In 1883 Savage's studio burned and his entire negative collection was destroyed. The energetic photographer set about the grim job of reestablishing his business and moving forward. During his later years he remained a stalwart member of the LDS faith and devoted much time to the comforts of the aged in Mormon society, including the establishment of Old Folks Day in Utah. He retired in 1906, the year twenty-two-year-old Edith Irvine photographed the San Francisco earthquake.

Exhibited are a full range of representative views of Savage's work. His pristine images of Salt Lake City taken from the scaffolding set up for the capstone laying of the Salt Lake Temple in 1892 are magnificent and genuinely panoramic, although not taken with a panoramic camera. They give a perspective on the capstone ceremony unavailable to most of the thousands who attended it and provide a photographic measure of how

far the Mormons had progressed in the development of the Salt Lake Valley in a mere forty-five years.

Samples of his "Views of the Great West" range from New Orleans to California and Oregon. His flawless albumen print of the Lehi Sugar Mill in operation, about 1910, is so real the viewer can almost smell the smoke. His view of the mission ruins at San Juan de Capistrano, California, is stark and bold. Its inherent dignity reminds us and his contemporaries, more effectively than words, that Europeans left their mark on the the West long before the Mormons arrived. Included in his Great West group is a faded *carte de visite* of the joining of the rails in 1869, juxtaposed next to his journal entry for the date he shot the picture. Finally, Savage's touch with people is revealed in sensitive portraits, such as in single shots of Orson Pratt and Heber J. Grant, of his own daughter in her theater costume in a hand-colored print, and in the magnificent and curious group portrait of the Original Cowboy Band of the Elks Lodge of Ouray, Colorado. This oversize albumen print shows them on the steps of the Salt Palace Theatre, where they were performing, probably sometime in the 1890s.

EDITH IRVINE, 1884–1949

Edith Irvine was born in Calaveras County, California, into the family of a well-to-do property owner in Mokelumne Hill, near Stockton. The Irvine family was one of the most prominent in the area. As a child, Edith was an adventurous tomboy who was game to try just about anything once. She attended local schools and graduated from high school in Berkeley, California.[33]

Irvine was born, lived most of her life, and died within ten miles of the central California town of San Andreas, after which the famous fault is named. She earned her living as a schoolteacher, a high school principal, and a newspaper editor. She also wrote an occasional poem and was a member of the Calaveras County Board of Education. She battled pain, poor health, and partial deafness for much of her adult life.

Irvine took up photography at an early age, using a lean-to darkroom on the back of the family home. She was hired in 1898—not yet out of high school and only fourteen years old—to photo-document the construction of the Electra Power Project in the nearby mountains. Designed to bring both water and power to Stockton, it was finished in 1902. Like those of her three exhibition colleagues, Irvine's images of the project are simultaneously documentation and art. From her methodical record of the powerful struggles of man and beast to build a dam to harness the powers of nature emanates a flood of powerful images: a great drive shaft for a hydroelectric turbine, trussed on its wagon carrier like a great felled and mute cannon, trailing its unconnected lifelines, gleaming in its many faces of reflected light; a grizzled, resolute, wise and even cocky old workman slumped on the back of a wagon, the epitome of the spirit of the American workingman; and water pipe and twenty-mule teams stretching in an artist's perspective toward the horizon.

Irvine's loaded, multipurpose images give us a workaday segment of time and place that is a monumental document of the actual American West and its mythic reality in the American psyche. Poetry and myth are present in the best of them, and they are worthy to adorn a gallery wall alongside the mountains, rocks, moons, and mudflats of the great master,

Ansel Adams. Considering her age at the time, between fourteen and eighteen, these views represent a small miracle.

Irvine's future claim to photographic distinction surely will be tied to her views of San Francisco's famous earthquake and fire of 1906. In all its tragedy, sorrow, pathos, and destruction, the San Francisco quake was an exotic chapter in the American West. Twenty-two-year-old Irvine and other photographers present—she was perhaps the only woman—photo-documented in wide-eyed wonder and innocence while struggling to maintain a semblance of professional presence of mind. For practitioners of the most technical and precise of the arts, documenting the aftermath of the great quake was an affront to the senses. Seemingly, the great clocklike mechanism of the world and universe had been smashed to bits by a cruel and hapless hammer. It was a world turned upside down.

Irvine happened upon photographic moments with events changing, sometimes rapidly, before her eyes. The terrible forces of nature unleashed provided those moments. If Irvine had tried to wait for perfect lighting the smoke would have shifted, the fire burned closer, the people with shocked downtrodden looks moved on, or the corpses grown more cold and grotesque. She could not leisurely wait for the right angle of the sun with stolid patience as Ansel Adams would years later, confident that the mountain in front of him would not go away or age noticeably as he waited to seize the light at the perfect moment. Irvine had to seize the *scene,* not just the light, before it changed—people passing by and walking on, a pained expression, horses newly dead and still warm, thick smoke rising, piles of brick and masonry and blackened rubble untouched by a cleanup workman's hand. In stumbling upon photographic moments, Irvine was like other photographers before her. Timothy O'Sullivan simply got "a feeling" when he happened upon the mystical beauty of Pyramid Lake. Matthew Brady felt the urgency of attempting to capture the image of the face of the shadow of death as it rushed by on winds of war when he stood with his camera tripod planted amidst the still warm corpses of the Civil War.[34]

Like Alfred Jacob Miller, whose beautiful paintings of the West "were meant to evoke feelings of surpassing, almost unreal beauty . . . [as if Miller were] painting a dream," Irvine's have come to us "as if from the hands of the Creator," so captivating and riveting are they when the eye falls upon them.[35] But she was photographing a nightmare, not a dream. For many, given the great fire that followed close upon the heels of the quake, it was a nightmare that lasted for days—even weeks.[36]

In her exhibit prints, the black skeleton of a tree stands watch over a scene of grey desolation that might be called After Armageddon. In grey, bleak streets lost souls wander in a wilderness of ruin, like rudderless ships at sea, in search of the lost moorings of their lives. Six dead horses are so focused, so dramatic, so poignant, that we forget momentarily to include in our sorrow the driver, who, judging from the wagon, surely must also have perished. Given her love of horses, she must have been pained as she composed that shot. Hundreds of footprints can be seen in the foreground, left by workers removing the bricks and the harness. Considering her undaunted pluck and respect for horses, one suspects her of having asked the workers to step aside momentarily while she took the picture so that the horses alone, lying in their stately dignity, could be the focus of her photograph. Thanks to her and others like her, all subsequent generations can share in the awe and shock, the pain, the wonder and fear, the monumental sadness,

the tears, and the power and faith-shaking mystery of the moment.

Irvine's pictures also show hope and human perseverance. In the midst of hopelessness, savage, indiscriminate destruction, and eyes in which the light of hope and life had been extinguished, we find the light of the future. There is hope in the busily moving refugees, carrying all that was left of their personal possessions, in search of a home away from home, seizing the moment to set up makeshift kitchens and even restaurants—West Coast American free enterprise alive and well before the embers had cooled. There was even humor, if one sought it, an evidence of the irrepressible human spirit. In a photograph of a street and its cable car tracks twisted into an elongated serpentine letter S by the force of the quake, some opportunistic soul who had not lost his sense of humor—or irony—has placed a sign seen in the left center of the photo that reads "Cheap Lots For Sale." To complement the humor Irvine captured irony in the piles of business ledgers and a 3 x 5 card file cabinet—the entire remains of someone's lifework—framed with the Metropolitan Insurance Company Building hovering protectively but helplessly in the background.

It was unusual for a woman to have taken these views. As mentioned, she may have been the only woman photographer to have captured professional quality images, sixty of them, of the quake scene. William Bronson, in his book *The Earth Shook, The Sky Burned,* acknowledges only "the men who took the pictures which fill this book. I will be grateful always for the record they left."[37] For some unknown reason her quake views were never published during her lifetime.[38] Perhaps like her contemporary Eva Atkins Campbell, she never got over the horror sufficiently to look at the prints and share them with others. Campbell characterized such feelings in a letter to her parents on 1 May 1906:

I have been waiting for the time to come when I felt equal to telling you something of the terrible disaster which has just befallen dear old "Frisco", but I am sure no one can describe it to appear as it really is—living in the midst of it really is the only way one can ever understand the horrors of such a calamity . . . Such heaves and quivers I shall never forget—I can feel the sensation now—every motion of the universe spells earthquake to me.[39]

Had Irvine's pictures been published at the time, they might have paralleled those of Jacob A. Riis in influence and ultimate fame. Riis's images were "shocking in . . . [their] visual impact, his series of prints helped lead to regulated housing."[40] Irvine's, along with others, could have led to earlier and more stringent earthquake construction codes.

Like many early photographers, Irvine practiced the art and craft of picture taking primarily as a sideline or a hobby. She taught school for a living. She was listed in the 1910 census as a photographer, but there is little additional corroborating evidence that she practiced as a professional photographer after the 1906 earthquake. She did not continue her photographic work for a variety of reasons. Although some of them are speculative, the most likely reasons are that she was too busy or too ill; she did not realize how good some of her work was; there was little money to be made in photography, especially by a woman; the memories of the horror of the quake lingered in her mind and came back each time she touched her cameras; and she could not afford to update to

new nitrocellulose film when it appeared in 1891, making glass plate negatives obsolete.

NOTES

1. Erla Zwingle, "Seizing the Light," *National Geographic* 176, no. 4 (October 1989): 530–47.
2. Jim Harrison, "Unimaginable Visions," *Harvard Magazine,* November–December, 1989, 21.
3. Ibid., 22.
4. Ibid.
5. Zwingle, 531.
6. See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981); Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1973); and Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1977).
7. One evidence of the growing abundance and value of photographic sources is the proliferation of professional literature devoted exclusively to such sources. See, for example the following: Siegfried Rempel, *The Care of Photographs* (New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1987); Robert A. Weinstein and Larry Booth, *Collection, Use, and Care of Historical Photographs* (Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1977); Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Gerald J. Munoff, and Margery S. Long, *Archives and Manuscripts: Administration of Photographic Collections* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1984); James M. Reilly, *Care and Identifications of 19th-Century Photographic Prints* (Rochester, N.Y.: Eastman Kodak Co., 1986); Steven L. Hensen, *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts—A Cataloging Manual . . .* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1989); and Helena Zinkham and Elisabeth Betz Parker, *Descriptive Terms for Graphic Materials: Genre and Physical Characteristic Headings* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1986).
8. See Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); and Martin W. Sandler, *The American Image: Photographing One Hundred Fifty Years in the Life of a Nation* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989). For an illuminating discussion of how we know and change the past by use of relics and artifacts, including photographic artifacts, see David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 185–323.
9. Harrison, 22.
10. Dorothy Hoobler and Thomas Hoobler, *Photographing the Frontier* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1980), 11–36.
11. William H. Goetzmann and William N. Goetzmann, *The West of the Imagination* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1986), 7–8.
12. For a recent publication of some of Irvine's images, see Thomas Y. Canby, "California Earthquake—Prelude to the Big One?" *National Geographic* 177, no. 5 (May 1990): 92–105.
13. This quote and much of the biographical information on Adams has been liberally excerpted from the entry in the International Center of Photography's *Encyclopedia of Photography* [hereafter cited as ICP *Encyclopedia*] (New York: Crown Publishers, 1984), 16–18.
14. Goetzmann and Goetzmann, 424–26.
15. Ibid., 432.
16. ICP *Encyclopedia,* 17–18.
17. The description of the exhibit prints draws heavily upon the beautiful prose of Nancy Newhall, the author of the introduction to Portfolio V. All quotes are drawn from her introduction.
18. See review of Peter B. Hales, *William Henry Jackson and the Transformation of the American Landscape,* in *AB Bookman's Weekly,* 31 October 1988, 1676.
19. Ibid.
20. For the basic biographical facts on Jackson used in this paragraph and those that follow, see the entry in the ICP *Encyclopedia,* 270–71; the wording of the entry has been excerpted liberally here.
21. Eric Paddock, "William Henry Jackson: Photographer and Entrepreneur," *AB Bookman's Weekly,* 31 October 1988, 1666.

22. Ibid., 1668. See also Peter B. Hales, *William Henry Jackson and the Transformation of the American Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), chaps. 3–4.
23. Paddock, 1669.
24. Ibid. See also Donald E. English, "William H. Jackson: Western Commercial Photographer," *Colorado Heritage,* nos. 1–2 (1983): 54.
25. Paddock, 1669.
26. Ibid.
27. Review of Hales, 1676.
28. See Rowe Findley and James L. Amos, "The Life and Times of William Henry Jackson," *National Geographic* 175, no. 2 (February 1989): 216–54.
29. The biographical information and quotations on Savage are drawn from Nelson Wadsworth, "Zion's Cameramen," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1972): 46–54; Nelson Wadsworth, *Through Camera Eyes* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), chaps. 9–12; and Madeleine B. Stern, "A Rocky Mountain Book Store: Savage and Ottinger of Utah," *Brigham Young University Studies* 9, no. 2 (Winter 1969): 144–54. The quotation is from "Zion's Cameramen," 5.
30. Andrews, 153.
31. Wadsworth, "Zion's Cameramen," 50.
32. Ibid.
33. The biographical information in this paragraph and those following is drawn entirely from Wilma Marie (Billy) Plunkett, "Edith Irvine: Her Life and Photography," M.A. Project, Brigham Young University, 1989.
34. Hoobler and Hoobler, 84–85.
35. Quotes from Goetzmann and Goetzmann, 66.
36. See Gladys Hansen and Emmet Condon, *Denial of Disaster* (San Francisco: Cameron and Co., 1989).
37. William Bronson, *The Earth Shook, The Sky Burned* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959).
38. The negatives, 256 in total, 60 of which were of the earthquake, sat in storage until they came to the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University as a donation from Irvine's nephew, Jim Irvine, in 1988.
39. Campbell to her parents in Louisiana, San Francisco, 1 May 1906, Department of Archives and Manuscripts, Harold B. Lee Library.
40. Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York* (1890; reprint, New York: Hill and Wang, 1957). See also Hansen and Condon, 107–15; and Zwingle, 545.

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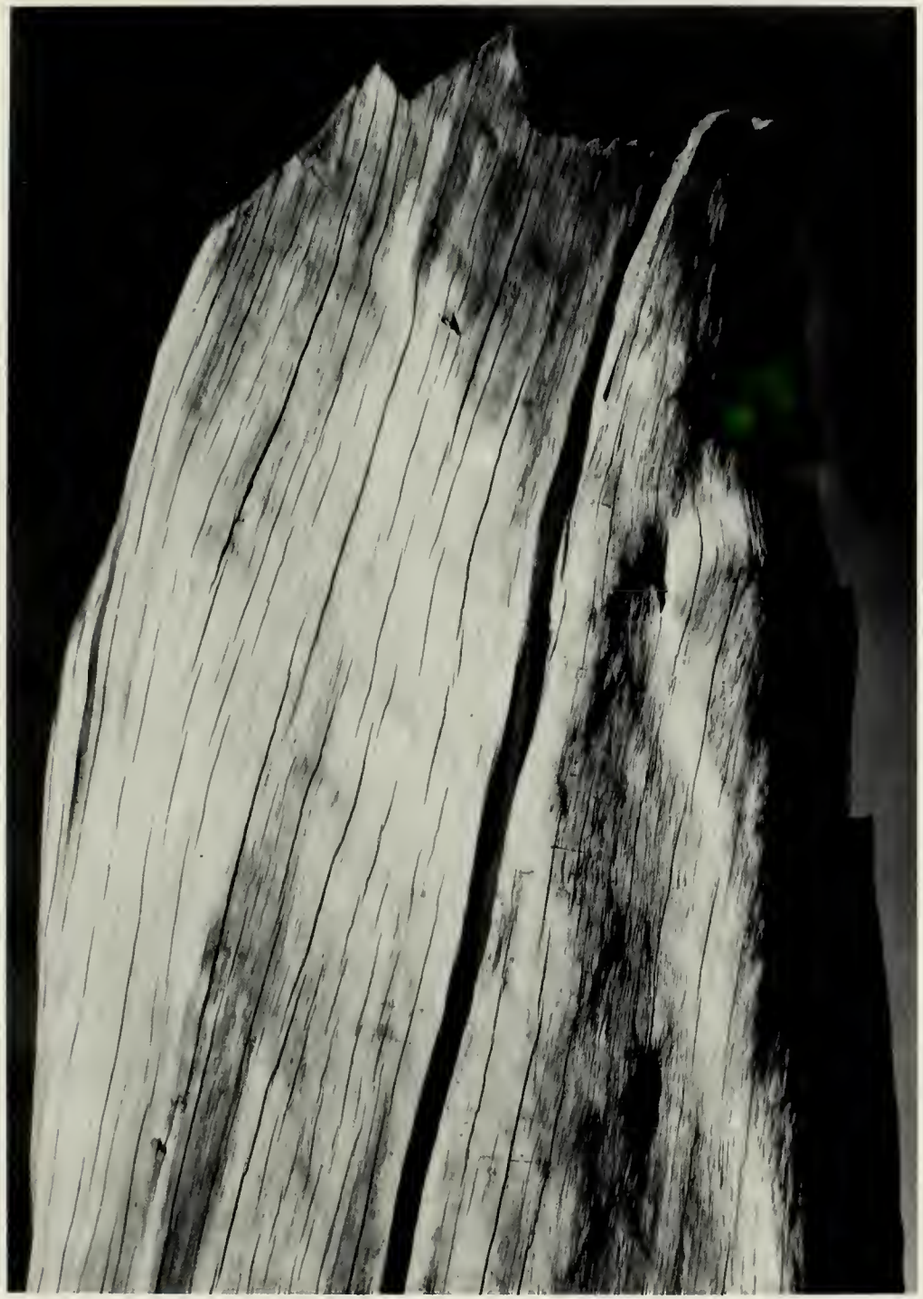
ANSEL

ADAMS

1902–1984

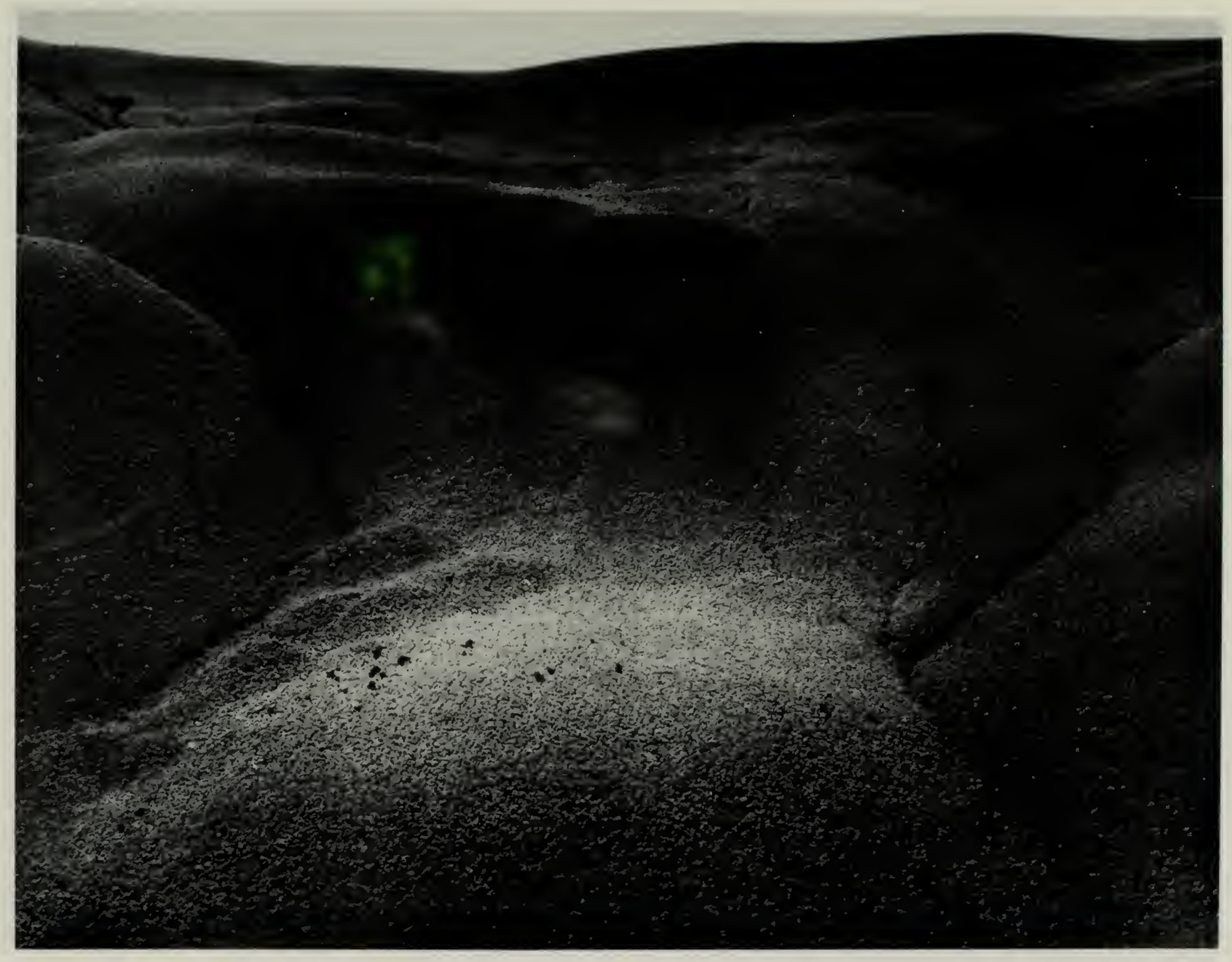
Ansel Adams. Portrait by Nancy Newhall. Published by permission.



Adams. White Stump, Sierra Nevada, California, 1936. Portfolio V.

Adams. The Black Sun, Tungsten Hills, Owens Valley, California, 1939. Portfolio V.

Adams. Pinnacles, Alabama Hills, Owens Valley, California, 1945. Portfolio V.



Adams. Mudhills, Arizona, 1947. Portfolio V.

Adams. Petroglyphs, Monument Valley, Utah, 1958. Portfolio V.

Adams. Moon and Clouds, Northern California, 1959. Portfolio V.

Adams. Lone Pine Peak, Sierra Nevada, California, 1960. Portfolio V.

Adams. Self-Portrait—Shadow.

WILLIAM
HENRY
JACKSON
1843–1942

Self-Portrait of Jackson from an Oil Painting.
BYU Library Collection.

Jackson. Hayden Expedition.

Jackson. The Assistants, Bill and Meg.

Jackson. Pueblo Laguna.

Jackson. 1000 Mile Tree, Weber Canyon.

Jackson. Canyon of the Grand.

Jackson. Eagle Gate.

Jackson. Evergreen Lake near Leadville.

Jackson. Cheyenne Falls.

Jackson. Ute Pass.

Jackson. Ambrotype of Caddie.

CHARLES
ROSCOE
SAVAGE
1832–1909

In Christmas Reverie. Ca. 1894.

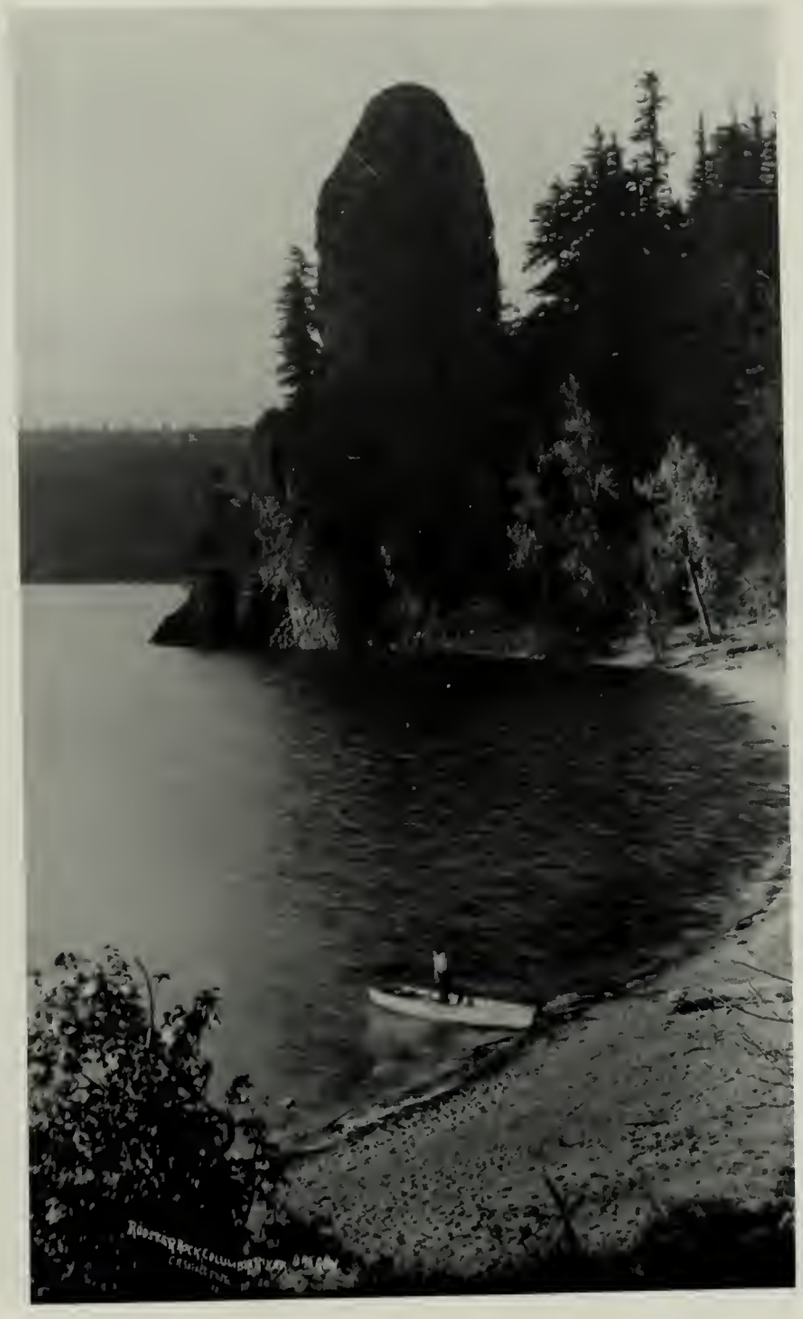
Savage. OSL Bridge, Heyburn, Idaho.

Savage. Sugar Cos. Mill, Lehi, Utah.

Savage. Logan Temple and City of Logan.

Savage. Cake Walk on Old Folks Day, July 6th, 1895, at the Lagoon, Farmington, Utah.

Savage. Lake Blanche, Big Cottonwood Canyon.



Savage. Rooster Rock, Columbia River, Oregon.

Savage. West Side of Main Street, Salt Lake City, Looking Northwest.

Savage. Downtown Salt Lake City Looking Southeast from the McCormick Building.

Savage. Salt Lake Temple under Construction, 1885 or 1886.

Savage. Placing the Capstone on the Mormon Temple, April 6, 1892.

Savage. The Original Cowboy Band.

Savage. Ruins of the Old Mission, San Juan Capistrano.

EDITH

IRVINE

1884–1949

Ca. 1900–1905.

Irvine. The Burned Tree, San Francisco Earthquake, April, 1906.

Irvine. Union Street West of Steiner, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Below Russian Hill Looking Toward North Beach Fire, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Busted Brewery, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Genesis of Air Pollution, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Flood Mansion on California and Mason Streets, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. The Area South of Market Street, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Helpless Spectator, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Home Sweet Home, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Standing Skeleton, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. **Looking Toward City Hall, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.**

Irvine. Business as Usual, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Fleeing to the Ferry, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Stunned, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. There Goes the Neighborhood, San Francisco Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Nob Hill Looking Southeast to the Call Building, San Francisco, Earthquake, 1906.

Irvine. Electra Powerhouse Rotor, Hydroelectric Project between Jackson and Mokelumne Hill, California, 1898–1902.

Irvine. The Shaft for the Rotor Above.

Irvine. Electra Penstock 8,000 Feet Above Camp.

Irvine. Electra Powerhouse and Camp on Mokelumne River, Northern California, 1902.

ANSEL ADAMS

Wall Mounted Items

1. *Moon and clouds, Northern California, 1959.* Silver gelatin print.
2. *The black sun, Tungsten Hills, Owens Valley, California, 1939.* Silver gelatin print.
3. *Petroglyphs, Monument Valley, Utah, 1958.* Silver gelatin print.
4. *White stump, Sierra Nevada, California, ca. 1936.* Silver gelatin print.
5. *Pinnacles, Alabama Hills, Owens Valley, California, 1945.* Silver gelatin print.
6. *Mudhills, Arizona, 1947.* Silver gelatin print.
7. *Lone Pine Peak, Sierra Nevada, California, ca. 1960.* Silver gelatin print.

WILLIAM HENRY JACKSON

Wall Mounted Items

1. *The Pueblo of Laguna, New Mexico.* Silver gelatin print.
2. *Jackson's assistant with camera in front of Laguna Pueblo.* Albumen print. [Inset]
3. *Bridge in Animas Canyon.* Albumen print.
4. *Ute Pass.* Silver gelatin print.
5. *Elk Park.* Albumen print.
6. *Canyon of the Grand in Utah.* Silver gelatin print.
7. *View of Rough and La Veta Mountains.* Albumen print.

Case No. 1

1. *Self-Portrait, 1873.* Oil.
2. *View from Independence Rock, 1940.* Watercolor. (Color photocopy).
3. *East from Independence Rock.* Hayden Survey photograph. Silver gelatin print.
4. *Caddie.* 1864. Ambrotype.
5. *The assistants.* Silver gelatin print.
6. 8 x 10 view camera similar in style to one used by Jackson.

Case No. 2

1. *Palace Butte Park, Gallatin Mountains, Montana Territory.* Albumen print.
2. *Photograph album open to views of Currecanti Needle, Black Canyon, Castle Gate, Utah, and Chipeta Falls Black Canyon.* Albumen prints.
3. *View on the Sweetwater.* Hayden Survey photograph. Silver gelatin print.
4. *Pikes Peak Trail.* Silver gelatin print.
5. *Members of the Hayden Expedition of 1870.* Hayden Survey photograph. Silver gelatin print.
6. *Down the Mancos from Cliff Canyon.* Albumen print.
7. *Infant's grave on the Sweetwater.* Hayden Survey photograph. Silver gelatin print.
8. *Packing firewood, Santa Fe, New Mexico.* Albumen print.
9. *A Ute buck, 1898.* Silver gelatin print, hand colored.
10. *Oldest house in Santa Fe.* Albumen print.

CHARLES ROSCOE SAVAGE

Wall Mounted Items

1. *The Original Cowboy Band of the Ouray Colorado Elks Lodge in front of the Salt Palace Theatre, ca. 1890.* Albumen print.
2. *Deseret News and Tithing Office buildings, Salt Lake City.* Albumen print.
3. *Church Buttes looking south.* Albumen print.
4. *Fort Bridger and Uintah Mountains.* Albumen print.
5. *Laying the capstone of the Salt Lake Temple, 6 April 1892.* Albumen print.
6. *Panorama of the Salt Lake Valley as seen from the scaffolding of the temple capstone laying, 6 April 1892.* 10 albumen prints.

Case No. 1

1. *Utah's best crop.* Silver gelatin print.
2. *George M. Ottinger, fire chief volunteer, Salt Lake City, 1876–1883.* Albumen cabinet print.
3. *Orson Pratt. Carte de visite* albumen.
4. *Heber J. Grant.* Albumen cabinet print.
5. *Joining the rails at Promontory Point, 1869. Carte de visite* albumen.
6. Savage's diary entry for 10 May 1869.
7. *Mrs. C. R. Savage.* Silver gelatin print.
8. *Mrs. C. R. Savage in front of family cabin, ca. 1870.* Silver gelatin print.
9. *Savage's daughter, Lennie Louise Riter, in theater costume.* Silver gelatin print, hand colored.

Case No. 2

1. C. R. Savage's advertising logo.
2. *Tucson, Arizona Territory, Southern Pacific Railroad view.* Albumen cabinet print.
3. *Utah Sugar Company Mill, Lehi, Utah, ca. 1910.* Albumen print.
4. *Oregon Short Line Railroad bridge and horse ferry, Heyburn, Idaho.* Albumen print.
5. *Salt Lake City from Prospect Hill, showing unfinished Salt Lake Temple, ca. 1890.* Albumen print.
6. *Steamboat Rocks, Echo Canyon, Union Pacific Railroad view.* Albumen print.
7. *Main Street, Ogden, Utah, ca. 1900.* Albumen print.
8. *Ruins of San Juan Capistrano Mission, California.* Albumen print.
9. *Old Folks Day, 6 July 1893, Lagoon, Farmington, Utah.* Albumen print.
10. *Rooster Rock, Columbia River, Oregon.* Albumen print.
11. *Bay View, San Francisco Harbor, ca. 1900.* Albumen print.
12. *View from the Tallac, Lake Tahoe, California.* Albumen print.
13. *Oyster boats, New Orleans, ca. 1900.* Albumen print.

EDITH IRVINE

Wall Mounted Items

1. *Electra power house rotor, Electra Hydroelectric Project near Stockton, California, ca. 1898.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate.

2. *Rotor shaft, Electra Hydroelectric Project near Stockton, California, ca. 1898.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate.
3. *San Francisco earthquake, 18 April 1906, below Russian Hill looking toward North Beach fire.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate.
4. *San Francisco earthquake, 18 April 1906, Nob Hill looking southwest.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate.
5. *San Francisco earthquake, 18 April 1906, produce area near the docks.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate.

Case No. 1

Photographs from Irvine family collection.

1. *Irvine as a student.* Albumen print.
2. *Mokelumne Hill, Irvine's hometown.* Albumen print.
3. *Irvine as a teacher.* Albumen print.
4. *Yosemite, Half Dome.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
5. *Irvine and her gramophone with a friend making ice cream.* Albumen print.
6. *Robert and Edith Irvine as teenagers.* Albumen print.
7. *Robert and Edith Irvine, "The Aristocrats."* Albumen print.
8. *Edith Irvine. Carte de visite* albumen.
9. *Irvine home in Mokelumne Hill.* Albumen print.
10. *Yosemite Valley, Glacier Point.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.

Case No. 2

The Electra Project.

Building the hydroelectric system in Calaveras County California, 1898–1902, brought water and electricity to Stockton, California, and to miners and farmers in the surrounding area.

1. *Penstock steel pipe going up.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.
2. *Hauling penstock.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.
3. *Electra Project from 8,000 feet.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.
4. *Meadow Lake Dam under construction.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.
5. *Upper Standard Canal.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.
6. *Meadow Lake Dam.* Silver gelatin print from original glass plate negative.

Case No. 3

Scenes of the San Francisco earthquake, 1906.

1. *Business as usual.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
2. *Second day.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
3. *Armed guard in the produce area.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
4. *Van Ness Avenue.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
5. *View from Nob Hill looking toward City Hall.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.

6. *Four-hundred-ninety-seven blocks destroyed.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
7. *City Hall.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
8. *Union Street, west of Steiner.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
9. *Office equipment and crowd at California and Sansome streets.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
10. *Four-hundred-ninety-seven blocks destroyed.* Silver gelatin print from glass plate negative.
11. Irvine's personal view cameras.

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